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SUBJECT: NETHERLANDS: S/WCI AMB. WILLIAMSON DISCUSSES SERBIA, KOSOVO, BELARUS

REF: A. THE HAGUE 789
 1B. THE HAGUE 743
 1C. SECSTATE 91908

Classified By: Political-Economic Counselor Andrew C. Mann for reasons 1.5(b,d)

11. (C) SUMMARY: S/WCI Ambassador Williamson explained U.S. priorities on Serbia, Kosovo, Belarus, and international tribunals during a September 16 meeting at the Dutch MFA. (Recent Georgia discussions, including those with Ambassador Williamson, reported reftel A.) The Dutch will firmly resist further EU integration overtures to Serbia until it fully cooperates with the International Tribunal for the Former Yugoslavia (ICTY). The Dutch will support Serbia's resolution on Kosovo's independence in the General Committee, but probably abstain on the measure in the General Assembly debate. The Dutch see positive developments in Belarus, but adopt a "wait and see attitude". END SUMMARY.

12. (C) On Serbia, the Dutch position on the integration of Serbia with the EU is unchanged: Serbia must first fully cooperate with the ICTY. Williamson spoke with Hugo Klijn, Head of the Southeast and Eastern Europe Department, Klijn's deputy Cees Roels, and Peter van der Vliet, chief of the UN Political and Legal Affairs. Williamson noted that Washington is pursuing two goals: justice for war criminals and integration of Serbia with the West. Roels noted Dutch opposition in the recent GAERC to the majority EU member states, interest in extending an SAA to Serbia should not be a surprise -- further overtures will have to wait on the cooperation of the government of Serbia. FM Verhagen feels his past efforts to pressure Serbia have been successful (i.e., Serbia delivered Mr. Karadzic to the ICTY). Moreover, Serbia is now in a "good position" to deliver the remaining ICTY indictees. President Tadic is in a strong position, and the radical parties are in disarray. ICTY Prosecutor Brammertz has also noted to the Dutch in private that the Serbs must have known Karadzic's location all along.

13. (C) On Kosovo, the Dutch have shifted their previously reported position (reftel B) on Serbia's resolution that asks the ICJ for an advisory opinion on Kosovo's independence. Van der Vliet said FM Verhagen has decided the Dutch will not block Serbia's resolution on Kosovo's independence in the General Committee, but the Dutch will abstain on the measure in the General Assembly debate unless the EU agrees to oppose it. (With respect to the General Committee, the Dutch believe that every Member State should have the right to present a proposal to UNGA, and consequently, do not want to use the General Committee to block Member State proposals). The Dutch found it compelling that Serbia is pursuing a peaceful, legal recourse and refraining from violence. Roels added that one group in Kosovo was not concerned about the prospect of an ICJ ruling, and a group in Serbia suggested a ruling by the ICJ on independence might provide political

cover to accept the Kosovo situation.

¶4. (C) On Belarus, Klijn described the existence of a strong Belarus lobby within the EU, and Belarus, achievement of certain benchmarks (e.g., release of political prisoners and "fairish" elections). In particular, Klijn noted that some EU nations are suggesting a more forward-leaning, favorable approach to Belarus. GONL, however, is adopting a "wait and see attitude." Klijn noted that Belarus may join Nicaragua and Russia in recognizing the independence of South Ossetia and Abkhazia. According to Klijn, the EU position, at this time, continues to be no official ministerial contacts.

¶5. (C) Regarding the international tribunals, the Dutch have agreed to contribute 4.5 million euros to the Special Court for Sierra Leone during the next three years (2 million this year; 2 million next year; and 500,000 in 2010). With respect to the ICC, Van der Vliet raised the issue of a Security Council deferral of the Prosecutor's investigation of Sudanese President Al-Bashir, noting that the United Kingdom and France have been sending out "feelers" on the issue and an OIC request for deferral. In particular, Van der Vliet asked whether there would be a solid P-3 veto. Williamson responded that the U.S. was unlikely to support any deferral proposal without some "extraordinary circumstances." Van der Vliet said the Dutch supported that approach.

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